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Eidetic analysis in Phenomenology as Try to Solve Polysemy Problem

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Abstract

Philosophers of language as well as cognitive linguists take language factor into account to a greater extent, treating language as a means of the cognition and interpretation of the surrounding reality. By this article we confirm the thesis that a thinking process is to the great extend connected with the processes of generalizations passing through the specific to the general and from the general through the specific to the singular.

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1. Introduction

Cognitive linguistics, especially in the later period, puts a greater emphasis on the consciousness of personal perception, i.e. in what manner a reflecting person comprehends reduction as a transcendental ego. We take as a basis the assumption that each transcendental phenomenological analysis can be carried out under the conditions of natural grounds refusing transcendental attitude. We also refuse purely psychological investigations in the field of transcendental personality theory. Since everyday experience doesn't allow us to determine base language notional structures, special methods are necessary which can act as an attempt to address the issue of notional structures "validity" and their components motivation.

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The proposed in the article analysis is based on the fundamental cognitive and phenomenological assumptions and takes into account theory of cognitive images. Speaking of imagery, it is impossible to ignore such a stereotypical mechanism of thinking as schematization. When distracted, non-object phenomena are conceptualized through an image and likeness of the material world and in the lexicon of imagery they take on a concretely sensuous form. Here develops the anthropomorphism of image perception – the commensurability of the surrounding reality with images and symbols that are easily understood by humans: images and symbols which become value based stereotypes. Indeed, straight is seen as being honest, true, while crooked is false; soft is seen as weak and good, while solid represents resoluteness and stubbornness. Reflecting the traditional ethno-cultural figurative representations embodied in language, this vocabulary conveys the value relation of man to himself and to the world around him.

The lexical approach aims at identifying the nature of imagery as a phenomenon inherent in words, in particular, its ability to reflect an imaginative vision of reality. It is possible to distinguish between linguistic and stylistic imagery, and with that, while using the stylistic approach in language, there forms, not only a logical, but an aesthetic way of thinking: An inadequate reflection of beings and objects, in which those features are consciously chosen and relayed, through which it is possible to transfer a given concept into a concrete pictorial form.

Kholodnaya (2002) identifies the following fundamental variants in the imagery of words: no images, concretely associated images, object-structural images (the substantive, detailed image of a specified object, in which the subject focuses on any of the object's essential features), sensual-sensory images (emotional experience), generalized images (the schemes in which the specified object is explained using a combination of highly generalized visual elements, such as vectors, points and geometric forms), conventional visual signs (maximally generalized images in the forms of alphabetic, numeric and algebraic symbols).

1.1 *Lexical Eidos as Essential Formula of a Word*

We continue to accomplish the task related to linguistic philosophy main questions, semantic layer of different levels determination and definition of the most significant, essential, and general semantic and mental properties, qualities, and mechanisms of consciousness. In this respect we introduce the concept of **lexical eidos (LE)** based on the theory of eidos accepted by phenomenologists. By the attribute “lexical” we emphasize language essence of the given phenomenon and state that an analysis of specific language material comes next.

We consider *Lexical eidos* to be a language essence, as an aggregate of the most significant universal semantic components which are intuitively defined in the course of phenomenological reduction and are unchanged in the stream of meanings variation composing the semantic formula of a word or a phrase; lexical eidos content is revealed at the level of scientific and logical consciousness (Pesina, Solonchak, 2014).

The further task in the frame of this paper is the determination of such universal components in the composition of universal objects semantically expressed by polysemantic words. It's necessary to define identification criteria of these universal objects, their semantic core in comparison with LE, state levels of representation and functioning of these phenomena.

We interpret LE in terms of linguistics as an invariant associative notional complex assigned to a word in the consciousness of communicants, which is based not only on word semantic structure, grammatical formation, word-formative structure, and motivational connections, but existing one in the society of tradition usage. However in the process of phenomenological reduction abstracting from grammatical, pragmatic, and morphologic connections takes place.

LE can be comprehended as an example of some pure possibility. In this regard Husserl's words which also fit the LE characteristics can be cited: “Eidos itself is a given in contemplation or available to contemplation universal – the pure, absolute, independent of any fact. It precedes all essences understood as words meanings; on the contrary they themselves should be formulated in accordance with eidos as pure notions” (Husserl, 2006).

LE includes the programme for all (or almost all) particular meanings of a word and, vice versa, each variant has subtle reference to a model which manages the process of transferred meanings semiosis. LE isn't of declarative, but dynamic, namely, procedural nature: the process of actualization of meanings by a speaker is conceived as sequential “assembly” of more complicated structures on the base of integral and differential components of the main meaning.

In long-term memory polysemantic words obviously have single instant connection between form image and generalized invariant meaning. It's possible to suppose that invariant meanings of polysemantic words are systemically important units which demonstrate the non-reflectivity of the language system level in relation to the speech level. It should be noted that phenomenology has always taken a great interest in revealing such universal units of a language system.

1.2 Eidetic Analysis Carrying Out

If we free from specific characteristics of a word semantics, it is possible to talk about absolutely empty form “something in general”, “form in general”. This is what we mean by *eidos* of a word. LE is formed as a result of the numerous manifestations of contextual meanings. It is formulated as a result of abstracting from everything that is psychic and those predicates of the objective world, the presence of which is personally conditioned.

Thus, LE of the word *shoulder* includes the first main meaning of a word – **«one of the two corresponding parts of the body at each side of the neck which join the arms to the trunk»** and an abstract semantic core which unites, consolidates all the other derivational meanings: **«a projection at an angle to anything near the top»**. The first meaning and the abstract core make up *lexical eidos* of a word *shoulder*. This LE is embedded in all meanings of this word, such as *shoulder of a bottle/bolt, shoulder of a knife, shoulder of a hill/mountain, shoulder of a railroad/roadway*. Due to LE the semantics of such meanings as *shoulder of a fire, shoulder of a finger ring, shoulder of a letter/character*, etc. becomes clear. This LE is obtained by the use of component analysis of each meaning of this word. The abstract part of the LE is obtained by the combination of the most important, basic for every meaning semantic attributes.

LE can be discovered introspectively, studying usage and basing upon polysemous word structure analysis. In our opinion, the polysemantic word system meaning of speech community is related to all actual meanings invariant, i.e. lexical core and lexical *eidos*. Semantic core consists of the smaller bundle of components, it is associated with lexis functioning. Thus semantic core is a linguistic essence, and LE is a philosophical one.

The next example is LE of a word *neck*: **«the part of the body which joins your head to the rest of the body or a narrow part of anything often near the top»**. This LE is embedded in all meanings of this word, such as *neck of a bottle, neck of a land, neck of a guitar/violin*, etc.

The analysis of these two words reveals the anthropocentric essence of the process of cognition of the surrounding reality by a person. At the moment of using the lexical *eidos* a word is a kind of being solidified in its unity and separates from the principal numerosity of its meanings. This numerosity is perceived as overtones of single solid and stable whole – an *eidos*.

The analysis of the given above point of view in regard to essence and specifics of linguistic world-image makes possible to define a hypothetic status of such phenomenon as LE. The proposed hypothesis aims at revealing in what manner linguistic world-image is represented in this phenomenon (Pesina, Solonchak, 2014). Since the method of reality conceptualization typical of language is partially nationally specific, the most significant components of a meaning representing such world view are embodied in such a notion as LE. Defining them it's possible to detect the stereotypes of reflections by person consciousness of subjects and phenomena corresponding to both scientific and partially naive worldviews. But the thing is that the latter frequently has nothing naïve except for refracted reflection of reality at a certain stage of human consciousness development.

The next example is LE of the word *cheek*. The component analysis revealed the following definition of this polysemous word: **one of the two soft side parts of the face below the eyes or one of the two corresponding lateral parts of anything**. The abstract part of LE is embedded in all meanings of this word, such as *cheek of a door/gate, cheek of a hammer, cheek of a mast, cheek of a vise, cheek of a foundry flask*.

Let's cite the analysis of several polysemantic words of other lexical semantic groups. Thus, the LE of the word *mountain* takes the following form: **a part of the Earth's surface, larger than a hill with steep sides rising above the level of the adjacent land, or something like a mountain – a large amount/pile of something rising above the level of the adjacent place or someone much bigger than others**. The features of abstract nature are the base of such meanings as *a mountain of food, a mountain of laundry, a mountain of trouble/work/evidence*.

It should be noted that the combination of the defined components of abstract nature is not chaotic in correlative

regard. They are always noematically interrelated. For this purpose we need to contemplate, discover the essence of things themselves. As a result carried out analysis acquires its transcendental base.

1.3 Polysemy and Lexical Eidos

This research proposes a solution of the most complicated problem of understanding and operating of polysemous words. It is known that the use of polysemous words poses a grinding difficulty for phenomenological analysis (and others), since any consciousness – phenomenological or ordinary – cannot but ignore the fact that polysemy impedes mutual understanding. The knowledge of LE or semantic formula of a word can help to avoid the necessity to keep in mind all figurative meanings. Each actualization of a meaning of a polysemantic word leads to the formation of some persistent knowledge (Solonchak, Pesina, 2014). This means some ideal immanence which refers us to further significant interrelations of possible syntheses. It makes possible to talk about system language meanings (in contrast to speech context realizations fixed in dictionaries) including components of abstract nature covering the semantics of all derived meanings. In other words, the notion of a subject as it is and a subject similar to it (metaphor) is possible.

Thus, the word *head* has quite a developed semantic structure and includes more than hundred meanings. The LE of this word, including both essential features of the main meaning and abstract substance of the word, can be formulated in the following way: head is **the upper part of the human body that contains the eyes, nose, mouth, ears and brain or something resembling it (the top, round and/or the most important part of a larger object; the beginning or end of it)**. The definition part in bold is supposedly the abstract scheme functioning in the consciousness of a language speaker as a result of numerous actualizations of more than hundred meanings.

Let's give examples in what way eidetic features are realized in remaining secondary meanings of this polysemant. For example, similar to the *head* as the **main** part in relation to the whole body, *head of fire* is its **upper** part, the hottest and the most active; *head of a stick/roll paper/violin bow/cigar/arrow/spear/axe* etc. are also oriented in space as the head towards the whole body, i.e. they can occupy the **upper** position or be a **beginning** of an object depending on vertical or horizontal spatial arrangement. The *head of a bed/grave* is not just their **beginning**, but the most **important** part. The *head of a stream/river*, i.e. their origin is compared to a human head as a **beginning** (comparison by the orientation in space), etc. In other words, the actualization of one or another meaning of the word *head* occurs on the base of one or several components of abstract nature or total LE.

Each separate meaning refers us to regulative eidetic structure, denotes a universal rule to which the processes of categorization and conceptualization of surrounding reality possible within some defined in advance typicality are subject to.

The components of abstract nature are formed due to modified transcendental experience of what we see and describe, to some transcendently reduced cogito. But as reflecting subjects they do not carry out natural supposing of being which is included in original direct perception of these meanings, taking place when direct plunging into the world. LE as a reflection of other order loses original mode corresponding to the direct act of contextual perception of a meaning.

The found abstract semantic cores equal to LE help to comprehend even the most difficult and semantically «distant» meanings derived from the first meaning which are given in dictionaries, but not always have explanations: *beer head*, *milk head*, *bridge head*, etc. If their base has the same invariant – **something upper, important, a beginning of something** – these meanings are comprehended and learnt simply: it is *foam*, *cream*, and the *beginning of a bridge*, correspondingly.

2. Conclusion

Thus, carrying out the research task we related to the study of semantic layers of different levels, ideal object revealing regardless of material substances. We formulated definitions of abstract character consisting of the most significant, essential, and general semantic and mental properties, qualities. We revealed mechanisms of consciousness basing on the theory of eidos in phenomenology. We introduced the concept of *lexical eidos* interpreted as an aggregate of the most significant universal semantic components which are intuitively defined in the course of phenomenological reduction and are unchanged in the stream of meanings variation. They compose

the semantic formula of a word or phrase. Lexical eidos content is revealed at the level of scientific and logical level of consciousness functioning.

LE being the model or formula of a word manages the process of metaphoric meanings semiosis and is fundamental for the concept formation. It can be decrypted as a universal construct, by means of which any articulation and therefore existential essence understanding becomes possible. By the use of it individual perceiving, understanding, and communicating is possible.

LE can be interpreted in terms of linguistics as an invariant associative notional complex assigned to a word in the consciousness of communicants, which is based not only on the word semantic structure, grammatical formation, word-formative structure, motivational connections, but existing in society of tradition usage. However, in the process of phenomenological reduction abstracting from grammatical, pragmatic, and morphologic connections takes place.

The LE acquired in the course of analysis has no components of subjective nature. Minimal abstracting from details made it possible to point out the most significant components of LE of general nature, practically covering the semantics of all meanings of the analyzed words. According to the rule of eidetic reduction the experience accidentally gained from reality should be systematically parenthesized. De facto it is true for any pure philosophizing, that the notions or the worlds of Ideas, as Plato wrote, consist only of a priori essential structures of reality.

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